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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

*Sam*

*BOOTLEB  
FYI  
(arrived this a.m.)*

October 11, 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR NATIONAL  
SECURITY AFFAIRS

SUBJECT: SR-71 Cuban Overflights (TS)

(TS/TK) The DCI and I agree that we will require a repetition of SR-71 missions over Cuba in the near future. As I indicated in my memorandum of 1 October, we need authority for use of the SR-71 as a continuing supplement to [ ] The criteria set forth by Admiral Turner in his memorandum are useful guidelines by which to schedule the missions.

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(TS) In lieu of a single mission during the next week, I recommend that DOD be granted the authority to overfly Cuba with SR-71 up to the limit of the presently scheduled six contingency missions per month without further recourse to the President or the SCC. We will still be able to provide you approximately 24 hours' notice of the intent to fly a mission, which will allow feedback on possible political sensitivities.

(TS) It is further recommended in light of the very low risk assessment, that the two pass mission versus the one pass mission be flown. The opportunity for collection is almost doubled on the two pass mission, because of the multiple coverage of the priority one and two targets. If there is scattered but significant cloud cover, a two pass mission substantially increases the probability of useful "take".

(TS/TK) The decision to fly the SR-71 will be contingent on the adequacy of [ ] or on other time-sensitive intelligence indicators of the key targets in Cuba, including the nine Soviet ground forces targets. The SR-71 will be scheduled to fly to fill gaps in [ ] or provide added coverage of those targets as required. The SR-71 will fly when scheduled or as soon thereafter as weather permits. If there is [ ] this would provide multiple coverage of the Soviet targets and broad area coverage of Cuba.

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Classified by DOD Instr S-5210.51  
Review on 1 Oct 1999

NRO and USAF review(s) completed.



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(TS/TK) Coverage of the nine Soviet ground forces targets by the [ ] and the one SR-71 flight has largely been inadequate due to weather. As I see it, the maximum frequency with which we will be overflying Cuba is every sixth day.

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*Harold Brown*

cc: Secretary of State  
Director, Central Intelligence



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CONTROL NO.  Pg 25

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NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE

WASHINGTON, D.C.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

October 5, 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Final Report

Dear Harold and Stan:

I am submitting herewith my final report as Director of the National Reconnaissance Office, a post which I assumed on August 3, 1977 and will leave on October 8, 1979. I am pleased to report that overall the National Reconnaissance Program is in good condition. We have been able to substantially increase the budget, develop several important, new technical programs and maintain generally good relationships with the elements of the Intelligence Community who depend upon our work. I also believe that we enjoy the respect of the people who review and approve our programs both in the Executive Branch and in the Congress. I thought that it might be useful at this point for me to recount some of the things that have been done and then, perhaps, put down some thoughts about the future.

After a thorough examination of the National Reconnaissance Program shortly after I became Director of the National Reconnaissance Office, I came to the conclusion that the National Reconnaissance Program was substantially underfunded when compared to the results expected of the satellite systems operated by the National Reconnaissance Office. This condition was probably a result of the fact that between 1968 and 1977 the dollar level of the program was set at approximately [redacted]

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[redacted] every year in terms of uninflated dollars. This meant, of course, that when inflation was taken into account the National Reconnaissance Program suffered a substantial decline in resources during those years. (The funding history of the National Reconnaissance Program in uninflated dollars is shown in Table 1.) My first priority as Director, therefore, was to reverse this trend and to see whether the purchasing power available to the National Reconnaissance Program could be increased.

During my first testimony before the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence in November 1977, I stated that the National Reconnaissance Program budget would have to be significantly increased in a few years if the capabilities necessary to support our intelligence requirements were to be properly developed. Among other things, I said that:

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COPY 2 OF 7 COPIES  
 PAGE 1 OF 7 PAGES

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"The important point I would like to make here is that this increase we are requesting is the start of the series of increases that we will have to have if the Congress approves the program that we are presenting today."

and, further on in the testimony:

"A commitment to the program that we are going to talk about today, will mean funding increases in the succeeding years in order to carry out the initiatives that we are going to propose."

and, finally:

"I would like to make it very clear that we are looking at, perhaps in the next five years, very substantial increases if we make these commitments."

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I am very pleased to report that the objective of significantly increasing the National Reconnaissance Program budget has been achieved. As shown in Table I, the National Reconnaissance Program budget has been roughly doubled since FY 1978 (in uninflated dollars) if the recommended FY 1981 program is approved at approximately the proposed level. In other words, the purchasing power of the funds available to the National Reconnaissance Program will have grown by about  in three years. The FY 1980 figure shown in Table I is now in the final stages of approval in Congress and will differ at most by a few million from

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Although the FY 1981 submission of  I have recommended has not been approved by the Executive Branch, I believe that, given the commitments made in the FY 1980 program, it is unlikely to be very much smaller than the figure I have recommended.

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In the two years that I have served as Director of the National Reconnaissance Office, I have had ample opportunity to observe the organization, how it works and what might be done to improve it. The most important feature of the National Reconnaissance Office organization is that it consists of three different program offices that belong to three different federal agencies. Although such an arrangement might seem awkward on the surface, it actually has some very real advantages. If the natural competition between the program offices belonging to different agencies can be channeled into technical areas in a constructive way, then the current organization has the potential of producing really superior technical satellite systems. It is important for the management of the National Reconnaissance Program to be fully aware of this potential and to make use of it whenever possible. The reporting structure of the Director of the National Reconnaissance Office is also an advantage. Direct access to both the Director of Central Intelligence and the Secretary of Defense is most important for the smooth functioning of the program. I strongly believe both of these features need to be continued. It is also important to preserve the streamlined procurement practices that are used by the National Reconnaissance Program. My estimate is that these procedures cut approximately one year out of the time it would otherwise take to bring a satellite system into being.

Although somewhat complex, the funding procedures for the National Reconnaissance Program work reasonably well. Perhaps the most important problem in this area that should be considered is how to develop procedures for joint funding of various National Reconnaissance programs, both by the National Foreign Intelligence Program and by the Department of Defense. I believe it is most important to try and develop means for doing this that are more standard and acceptable than the ones we have at present.

[redacted] and this has been a very productive arrangement for the Air Force and the National Reconnaissance Program. In 1978, an initiative to use U.S. Army funding to support the tactical data processing for the [redacted] was approved and in the Fiscal Year 80 program, Navy funding is postulated for doubling the collection capability of the [redacted]. I hope very much that partial funding of the [redacted] program by the Department of the Navy will eventually be approved and that the protocols which determine joint agency funding will be expanded.

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I want now to turn toward two of the longer term problems that will be faced by the National Reconnaissance Program management in the coming years. The first has to do with the "normalization" of the National Reconnaissance Office. Since the National Reconnaissance Office was established in 1962, it has been a covert organization whose very existence is classified. In the last few years, there has been a significant "de facto" change in this situation. The activities of the National Reconnaissance Office are now generally fairly well known through a combination of espionage, leaks to the press and deliberate decisions to declassify some of the functions of National Reconnaissance Office satellite systems. I believe this trend will continue. At the same time, the budget approval process for the National Reconnaissance Program has also been "normalized." When the National Reconnaissance Office was established, the budget approval process was very "streamlined" in the sense that not many people needed to be consulted to secure budget approval. Today this is no longer true. The National Reconnaissance Program has exactly the same budget approval process, both in the Executive Branch and in the Congress, that applies to other similar advanced technical programs. I believe the time is not too far distant when the National Reconnaissance Office will become overt--that is the existence of the National Reconnaissance Office as an organization will be acknowledged--and that we must begin to think about how to react to this event. Perhaps it might even be advisable for the management of the National Reconnaissance Office to lead an effort to declassify its existence so that any undesirable features can be ironed out ahead of time. There are some organizational arguments that would tend to favor declassification of the existence of the National Reconnaissance Office. At the present time, charters defining the functions of various organizations in the intelligence community are being developed in the Congress. There is no formal charter currently planned, however, for the National Reconnaissance Office because of the classified nature of the organization and there is at least some reason to believe that this circumstance will eventually hurt the National Reconnaissance Office. However, the most powerful argument in favor of declassifying the existence of the National Reconnaissance Office is based on the simple fact that it is already well known to the knowledgeable public that it exists. To continue to keep the National Reconnaissance Office secret will eventually lead to a situation where everyone in the government will believe that the National Reconnaissance Office is secret and everyone else in the country will be like the famous little boy who knew, really, that the emperor had no clothes.

In making the suggestion that we should seriously consider declassifying the existence of the National Reconnaissance Office, I want to make certain that this is not misinterpreted. Declassifying the existence of the office does not mean declassifying the things it does. I have argued consistently that we need to be more discriminating in developing the proper classification levels for satellite systems. Some of the

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PAGE 5 OF 7 PAGES

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things we do are well known and could be declassified or at least decompartmented. Most of our imagery program belongs in that category. On the other hand some of the things we do in communications intercepts are exceedingly sensitive.

The second long term problem faced by the National Reconnaissance Office is the conversion of satellite systems managed by the organization to the new Space Shuttle system. In general, there has been some reluctance by the people in the National Security Community, both in the Department of Defense and in the National Reconnaissance Program, to commit to using the Shuttle. There are two reasons for this. One is a genuine concern that many people have regarding the technical feasibility and the economic viability of the Shuttle. These concerns have been heightened this past year by the problems encountered by NASA in the technical development of the program. The other concern has been a fear that a common launch vehicle such as the Shuttle, which will be used by all agencies having business in space, will lead to a loss of control over the program and ultimately produce adverse impacts on the national security. Both of these fears are, in my opinion, legitimate and they need to be dealt with squarely and faced in an honest way. If this is not done, the program managers responsible for National Reconnaissance payloads will reluctantly go along with conversion to the Shuttle but they will not take advantage of the unique capabilities of the vehicle.

I believe that in spite of current problems with the Shuttle the nation will renew its commitment to converting our launch vehicles from the currently used expendables to the new Shuttle system. Furthermore, I believe this commitment will be more or less independent of the political situation as it develops in the coming year. Thus, I believe that the National Reconnaissance Program must maintain the strong commitment that it has made to take advantage of the unique properties of the Shuttle. I also believe the National Reconnaissance Program and the national security community generally must act to see to it that proper organizational arrangements are developed so that the national security community retains adequate control over Shuttle operations. At this time I have no concrete suggestions on this matter but there is no question whatsoever in my mind that it is of the utmost importance to start to develop the necessary institutional arrangements to accomplish this objective. What is most important is that the national security community maintain a strong commitment to the Shuttle so that the members of the community will continue to have a strong influence on how it is eventually employed.

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Let me conclude by saying that I have very much enjoyed working with the people in the National Reconnaissance Office. I would like to thank both of you, Dr. Brown and Admiral Turner, for your continued strong support of the program. I would also like to add my personal thanks to members of the National Reconnaissance Office Staff, specifically Dr. Charles W. Cook, the Deputy Director of the National Reconnaissance Office and Mr. Jimmie D. Hill, the Director of the Headquarters Staff, and also to the project managers, Major General John E. Kulpa, Jr., U.S. Air Force (Program A); Mr. Leslie C. Dirks, Central Intelligence Agency (Program B); and Rear Admiral Grover Yowell, U.S. Navy (Program C). It has been a great pleasure for me to have the opportunity to work with all of these people during the past two years and I hope that their efforts will continue to be properly recognized.

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours

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Hans Mark

cc: Mr. Frank Carlucci

Dr. Gerald Dinneen  
 Adm Daniel J. Murphy  
 Maj Gen John E. Kulpa  
 Mr. Leslie C. Dirks  
 Rear Adm Grover Yowell  
 General Lew Allen  
 Dr. Robert J. Hermann  
 Mr. Jimmie D. Hill  
 Dr. Charles W. Cook  
 Hon W. Graham Claytor, Jr.

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 PAGE 7 OF 7 PAGES